

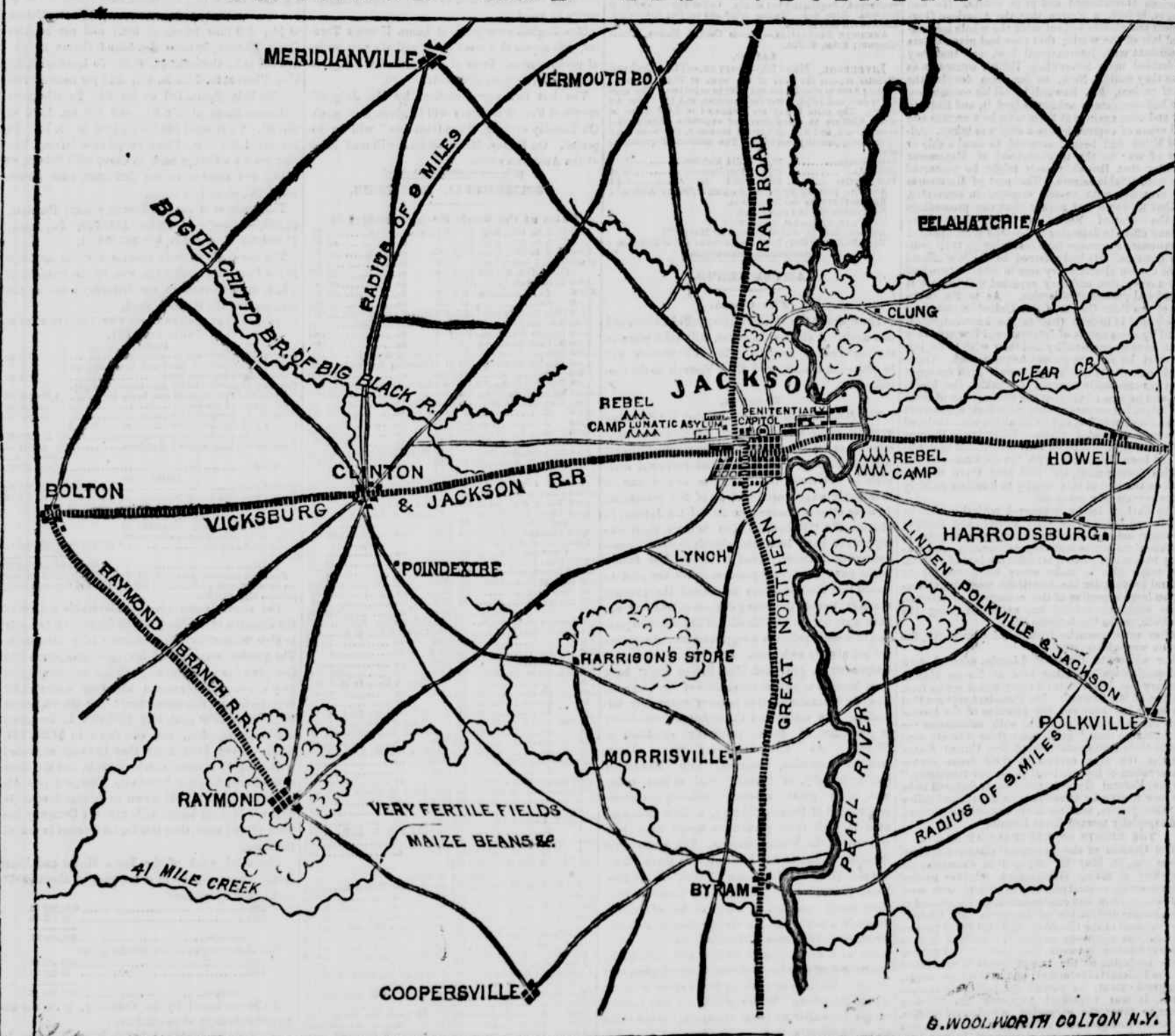
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## JACKSON AND ITS VICINITY.



Station, located on the main road leading to that goal. On the 15th McPherson and Hovey were in the neighborhood of Clinton, eighteen miles distant, on the Jackson Railroad. Blair was moving forward on the road from Grand Gulf to Raymond, and within call. A. J. Smith was advancing from Montgomery Ford on the "Four Mile Creek." Carr and Osterhaus were at or near Raymond. Hence the entire army, with the exception of Sherman's corps, which was at Jackson, although scattered, were capable, by a day's march, of concentrating upon Edwards Station. In the evening of the 15th, Gen. McClelland ordered the various regiments to move upon Edwards's Station, as follows: Blair to move on the road first diverging to Edwards's Station, a from the Bolton and Raymond road, about a mile and a half from Raymond, and so forming the left wing; Osterhaus to move on the road next diverging to Edwards Station, and about three miles from Raymond, and so form the center; General Carr to move on the same road as Osterhaus, and thus form a reserve; Gen. Hovey to move on or near the road leading on the south side of the railroad from Bolton to Edwards's Station, each division to move promptly at 6 o'clock on the morning of the 16th, except Gen. Blair's, which was to move, at 5, and all to leave their baggage trains in the rear, so as to be out of the way. Each of these divisions were to move simultaneously upon Edwards's Station, converging upon that point, and preserving constant communication. Gen. Smith was directed to follow Blair; but this order was changed, so as to place Smith in front and Blair in the rear. Gen. McPherson was expected to move forward on the north side of the road from Bolton to Edwards's Station, and thus prevent the enemy from escaping in that direction. From this order, it will be seen that the columns of McClelland and McPherson were to advance from positions lying in an irregular arc of 90 degrees upon radiating lines, uniting at Edwards's Station. Such was the strategic plan of battle. The character of the country traversed by these roads would be difficult to describe. It was a nondescript blending of hill and ravine; of clumps of timber, high, open plateaus, sometimes under tillage, more frequently grassy meadows, but chiefly, especially on the theater of the battle, dense timber, deep gloomy gorges, natural earthworks and ambushes. Hovey's Division, being the right of the advance column under McClelland, marched upon the main road from Jackson to Edwards's Station, and, of course, was likely to encounter the heaviest opposition. We had been advised by various rumors, particularly a very coherent statement by a negro—Daguer, who came in from Rebel quarters, that the enemy, in great force, numbering at least 25,000, were advancing upon Raymond; and the brigade of Gen. Featherstone by way of Bolton; that the main body of the army were along a road which intersects the Bolton and Raymond road about half way. Hence, the army felt its way along cautiously, throwing out a heavy force of skirmishers in advance.

By 9 o'clock it was evident from the heavy skirmishing in the direction of Hovey's division that we had flushed the game, and Gen. Carr's two brigades were quickly drawn up in battle line along the crest of an open rolling table land, while Osterhaus was advanced into the timber beyond. Smith and Blair were hidden by a cove of timber to the left. The scene was a picture of all that was splendid and chivalric, and inspiring in war. There was the clear sunlight of May morning shining on blue squares of soldiery; lines of bayonets that flashed like threads of steel, and the "crimson glories" of many a waving banner.

Gradually, as the morning advanced, the rattle of musketry increased in volume, mingling with the discharge of cannon at the right and left. Galloping orderlies, artillery rushing forward enveloped in clouds of dust, and a strata of sulphurous smoke settling over the forest, showed that the action was commencing in good earnest.

After entering the timber, the road makes a sharp turn to the right, and after continuing in that direction for about three-quarters of a mile, resumes its former course. From this transverse section of the road, the troops under Osterhaus were pushed forward into the forest on the left of Hovey. By noon the firing in the direction of the latter officer's command had increased until it became terrific. The musketry at the Post of Arkansas, and Port Gibson, was feeble in comparison. It was one continuous, interminable, tremendous, volleying. From the movement of the sound it was plain that Hovey was being hard pressed and forced back. An officer of my acquaintance, hurrying by, to the question how we were getting along on the right—answered that Gen. Hovey was severely pushed and wanted reinforcements from Osterhaus; that we had captured a battery of four pieces from the enemy, and had advanced some distance. Nothing was to be done but to find some shady spot by the roadside and wait the issue. The air was hot, and filled with dust, the soldiers must be nearly exhausted. The musketry was, if possible, increasing and still moving backward. It was evident that the enemy was throwing himself with the energy of desperation upon our right, in order to break it before Carr and Blair could engage them. However, five regiments from Osterhaus were sent to support the right, and it was ascertained that Crocker with Quincy's division from McPherson's corps had also been engaged. Three o'clock in the afternoon brought the welcome intelligence that the enemy were in full retreat; that Benton's brigade which had been ordered to take the advance were pressing them vigorously. The portion of the battle-field which I saw gave evidence of a very sanguinary struggle. I have seen nothing like it since the days of Shiloh. Through forest glade and field they lay, oh, how many! brethren of a common household, although enemies when living, and were at last stretched out side by side, under the glare of the hot afternoon, and the sound of cannon and rushing men, in a strange and awful repose. How long is the earth to shudder at the sound of cannon, and grow ghastly with carnage! Is it the paradise of God or the altar of Moloch? Is man his image or a lump of carrion to be gashed and torn with grapeshot and steel? Every house at the way side had been transformed into a hospital, and filled with the wounded and dying.

Prisoners were streaming in from all directions, and generally gave themselves up voluntarily. Some of the particulars of the engagement I learned after the battle was over. Gen. Hovey upon advancing found the enemy with his batteries strongly posted at the top of a series of steeples, and commanding the road which ascended upon the crest of a ridge. The brigades of the McGinniss and Slack were immediately pushed up on either side of the road, and partially screened from the guns. After an obstinate struggle they were taken, two by the 29th Wis., and two by the 11th Indiana. The troops of the division continued to push on, and were so far successful as to take 6 more cannon. But the advance had been so rapid that Hovey soon found himself without support, and fighting the whole body of the enemy. McPherson had selected a splendid position still further to the right on the edge of the timber and sweeping an open field. This position the Rebels were shy of and threw their main force upon Hovey who was unable from the

nature of his position to use his batteries to advantage. After a prolonged and desperate engagement the 42d Ohio, which formed the right of 5 regiments sent from Osterhaus to support Hovey, were attacked in front and on the flank, and compelled one by one to give way. The line being thus flanked, the 42d Ohio, 49th and 69th Indiana and 118th successively finding themselves exposed to an enfilading fire, fell back for a short distance. This was the only serious check our forces met with. Meanwhile Boomer's Brigade of Quincy's Division were engaging the enemy from the right, and to that Brigade we are greatly indebted for the repulse which took place shortly after, at about 3 p. m.

In this action the 29th and 124th Illinois of J. E. Smith's Brigade and Logan's Division took two field-pieces.

The battle of Champion Hills was by far the most bloody of the campaign. For the space of an hour the fighting could hardly have been more fiercely carried on. Both McGinniss's and Slack's Brigades lost over 600 killed and wounded. Boomer's Brigade lost not far from 500, and that of Holmes is estimated at nearly 100. Lawler's Brigade suffered but little, and was not fairly engaged during the day. Carr's Division being held as a reserve did not come into the action. Smith's Division fought the enemy almost entirely with cannon, and his infantry was not employed. Gen. Burbridge's Brigade captured 400 prisoners. The entire loss in killed and wounded will probably fall but little short of 2,500. During this engagement one or two incidents occurred which are likely to form a part of history.

Col. Barther, of the 24th Indiana, seeing the regimental flag without a standard-bearer, seized the colors and rushed forward at the head of his troops, until the hand that bore aloft the ensign was shot away. Major Goodman, of the 47th Ohio, after being wounded in the chest, captured a prisoner and compelled him to carry him back to the rear. Among the killed were that gallant officer, Capt. Mitchell, of the 16th Indiana, and Capt. Wellman of the 24th Indiana. Among the captures were a number of colors; among others those of the Fowler Battery; Gen. Smith captured twelve cannon, horses and all. Gen. Blair captured ten cannon which had been abandoned by the enemy.

The smoke of the battle had not cleared away, when the columns of our army were again in motion—Lippincott's 33d Illinois, of Benton's Brigade, in the advance as skirmishers. Everything indicated the most panic-stricken haste on the part of the enemy. Guns had been abandoned, knapsacks and blankets thrown down in flight were scattered about the road in great numbers. Stragglers of the Rebel army were captured almost by hundreds, and what was particularly noticeable, was the fact that they gave themselves up willingly, and showed a most extraordinary resignation. They frequently expressed themselves as glad to be prisoners and out of the Confederate army. It was plain that the Southern army was totally demoralized and on a grand "skedaddle." From prisoners we learned that Gen. Tilghman had been killed in the engagement by a shell from Burbridge's Brigade.

THE BATTLE OF BLACK RIVER BRIDGE has again covered the army with imperishable renown.

Twelve miles from Vicksburg the railroad from that city to Jackson crosses the Big Black, on a bridge of trestle work of three quarters of a mile in extent. At this point the river makes a curve to the west almost semi-lunar. A moat or creek, for it is both natural and artificial, intersects the stream to the north and south, and is fed by it. Instead of running in a straight line this moat makes a bend to

the east. It is probably a mile and a half long. Toward its northern extremity the ground is covered with heavy timber, so dense as to make the land impassable to wagons and even to horsemen. Another growth of forest skirts the river in the other direction. Between these extremities, for a distance of nearly a mile, is a tract of flat open country, through which passes the railroad and wagon road to Vicksburg. As our troops advanced the skirmishers could see a long, low line of rifle pits, cotton breastworks, the muzzles of cannon, and an abatis of felled trees. A single glance showed that the position was one of great strength. It was a level plain of a quarter of a mile in extent, swept by cannon and musketry. A more formidable array of field works could hardly have been devised. These works were to be stormed, and the task was accomplished in a manner that will always be a marvel in military annals.

After a furious cannonade, increased fourfold by the water and forest, the whole army was drawn up at the edge of the woods fronting the earthworks—Carr on the right, Osterhaus in the center, A. J. Smith on the left. Hovey had been ordered to remain on the battle-field to bury the dead, and